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45 Holmes Road Statement of Community Involvement

Tiuta Properties Ltd.

April 2014

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1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 In January 2014, Tiuta Properties (referred to as the “Applicant”) appointed Four Communications, a specialist public affairs company, to handle the community consultation and stakeholder relations for their proposals to redevelop the land at 45 Holmes Road.
- 1.2 The brief was to develop and implement an engagement strategy with London Borough of Camden Councillors, local stakeholder groups, immediate neighbours, residents and businesses in the surrounding area.
- 1.3 The existing building is dated and would need significant upgrading and maintenance to meet the needs of the modern industry. The former owners, Bird & Davis, are a framing and art supplies business who occupied the site for approximately 20 years and the nature of their business has changed in recent years and as a result their demand for employment space has decreased. There has been a great deal of change in the character of the area in Holmes Road, which has seen a transition from largely-low rise industrial sites to larger scale residential-led mixed use developments. The Applicant’s objectives for their proposals is to fit in with the emerging character of the area, whilst delivering employment space, local jobs and new homes.
- 1.4 The consultation process was carried out in parallel to the planning and design team’s pre-application planning meetings with the London Borough of Camden.
- 1.5 Activities undertaken as part of the consultation process have included:
 - Offer of a briefing on the proposals to all three Kentish Town Ward Councillors and Councillor Phil Jones, Cabinet Member for Sustainability, Transport & Planning
 - A stakeholder meeting and site visit with representatives from Kentish Town Neighbourhood Forum, the Inkerman Area Residents Association and the Kentish Town Road Action and representatives from 55 Holmes Road.
 - An open meeting for residents of 55 Holmes Road
 - A meeting with St Patrick’s Primary School
 - A meeting with Collège Francais Bilingue de Londres
 - Letters sent to approximately 1,000 local residents and businesses, providing an invitation to a public consultation exhibition
 - A public consultation exhibition
 - Provision of feedback forms at the exhibition, enabling residents, relevant stakeholders and businesses to provide feedback and leave comments.
- 1.6 Throughout the consultation process a telephone number, e-mail and FREEPOST address were supplied and managed by Four Communications. Further information, when requested, was provided to residents, businesses and stakeholders. The Applicant is committed to on-going consultation and providing further information as the applications progresses.
- 1.7 Overall, the feedback received during the consultation programme was positive and demonstrates support for the key principles behind the comprehensive re-development of 45 Holmes Road. Many of those we consulted were encouraged by the proposals for a high-quality redevelopment of the existing site. Moreover, the provision of a mix of residential and flexible B1 commercial space was largely considered appropriate for the site. However, concerns were raised about the height bulk and massing of the scheme. This was particularly an issue for residents from 55 Holmes Road and some residents from Inkerman Road. As a

result of this consultation, the scheme has changed considerably with significant changes to the bulk and massing, which are explained in further detail later in this document.

2.0 Planning Policy Context

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (2012) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and Wales and how these are expected to be applied. It sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system only to the extent that it is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so. It provides a framework within which local people and their accountable councils can produce their own distinctive local and neighbourhood plans, which reflect the needs and priorities of their communities. The following sections and paragraphs (numbered from the Framework) are relevant.

Decision taking

Local planning authorities should approach decision-taking in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development. The relationship between decision-taking and plan-making should be seamless, translating plans into high quality development on the ground. (Paragraph 186)

Local planning authorities should look for solutions rather than problems, and decision-takers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible. Local planning authorities should work proactively with applicants to secure developments that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. (Paragraph 187)

Pre-application engagement and front loading

Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community. (Paragraph 188)

3.0 Summary of community and stakeholder consultation

3.1 The table below summarises all the community engagement, including meetings held with local and political stakeholders, since the outset of the consultation in February 2014.

Date	Consultation
15 January 2014	Offer of a briefing to all three Kentish Town ward councillors and Councillor Phil Jones, Cabinet Member for Sustainability, Transport & Planning
1 February 2014	A meeting with the Kentish Town Neighbourhood Forum, the Inkerman Area Residents Association, the Kentish Town Road Action and resident representatives from 55 Holmes Road
10 February 2014	Letters sent to approximately 1,000 local residents, local stakeholders and businesses, providing an invitation to a public consultation exhibition
13 February 2014	A meeting with residents from 55 Holmes Road
14 February 2014	A meeting with St Patrick's Primary School
19 February 2014	Public consultation exhibition
26 February 2014	A meeting with Collège Francais Bilingue de Londres
Ongoing	Ongoing liaison with local residents including responses to residents' queries and provision of computer generated images views to residents in 55 Holmes Road to help them understand the impact on visual amenity.

3.2 On behalf of the Applicant and project team, Four Communications developed a consultation strategy with key stakeholders and local residents.

3.3 After initial meetings with local stakeholder groups, a programme of consultation with the wider community began in February 2014 when approximately 1,000 invitations were sent to households and businesses in the area surrounding the site, introducing the scheme and publicising a public consultation exhibition.

3.4 The exhibition provided an opportunity for residents, local workers and businesses to view the proposals and discuss key local issues with leading members of the development and design team.

3.5 The Applicant will maintain contact with local Councillors, amenity groups, and the wider community up until the point when the planning application is determined.

4.0 Pre-submission public consultation exhibition

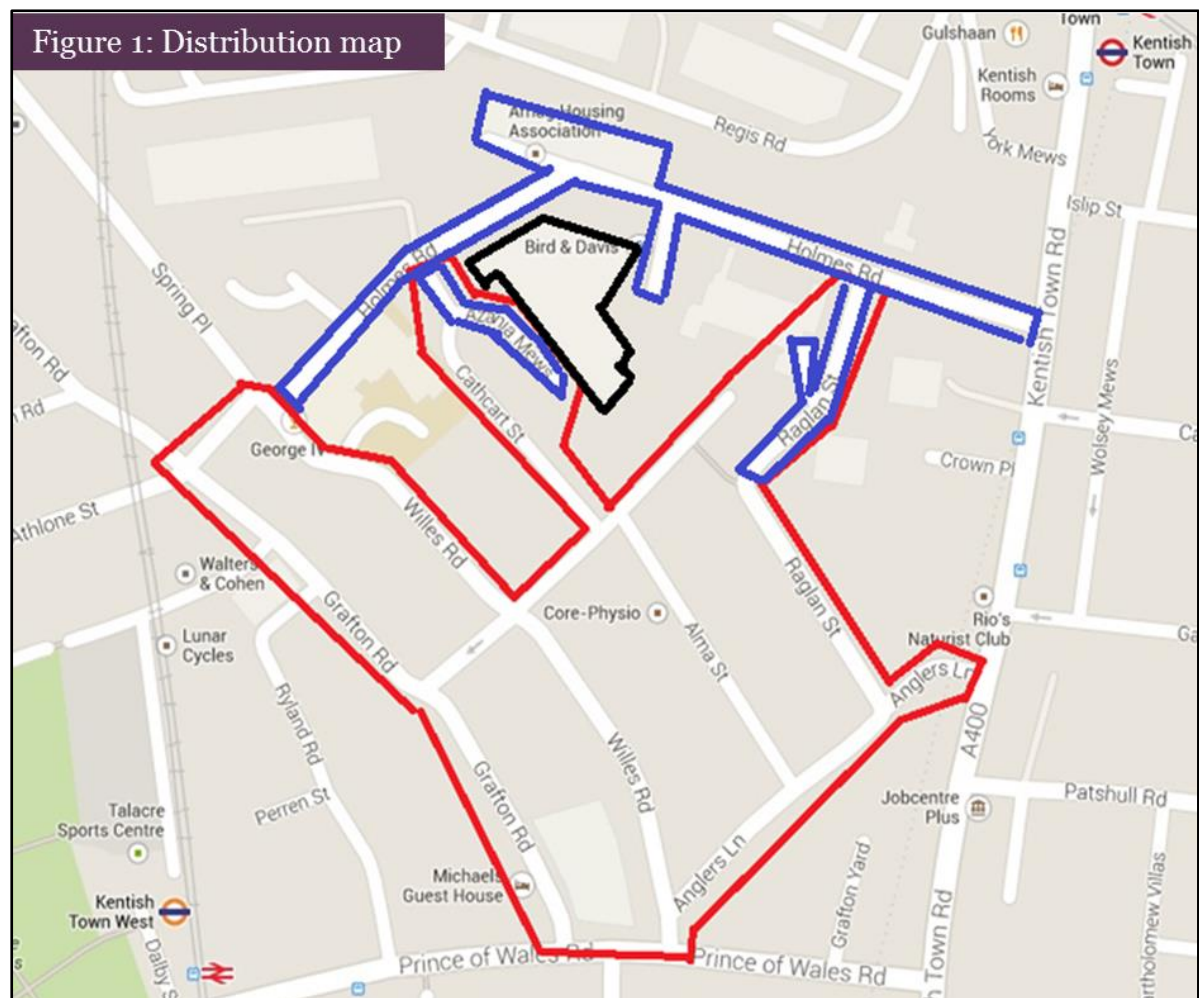
- 4.1 The Applicant held a public consultation exhibition to display the proposals for the redevelopment of 45 Holmes Road on Wednesday 19 February 2014 from 3pm to 8pm. Invitations were sent to approximately 1,000 local addresses; over the course of the day, around 26 neighbours attended the exhibition. A copy of the invitation letter has been incorporated into this document as Appendix I.
- 4.2 The purpose of the exhibition was to explain the Applicant's vision for the site, identify key local issues and provide an opportunity for neighbours to give their feedback. Members of the development and design team, including representatives from the Applicant, Lynas Architects, Dp9 and Four Communications were available to explain the information presented and answer any questions.
- 4.3 The scheme was presented on 10 A1-sized display boards which provided neighbours with a clear overview of the scheme to date. Sample materials, such as the proposed brick, were on display at the exhibition. Copies of the boards have been incorporated into this document as Appendix III.
- 4.4 Exhibition attendees were provided with feedback forms. A copy of the feedback form has been incorporated into this document as Appendix II. At the time of writing, 12 responses had been received.
- 4.5 Overall, the feedback received from exhibition attendees was positive and demonstrates support for the key principles behind the development. Attendees were encouraged by the proposals for a high-quality redevelopment of the existing site. Moreover, the provision of a mix of residential and light-industrial space was largely considered appropriate for the site.
- 4.6 Attendees welcomed the industrial feel of the architecture and felt it would complement the local character and history of the area. The inclusion of large, family sized affordable housing units was also welcomed by attendees – as was the provision of a flexible employment space which would maximise the potential for jobs in the area.
- 4.7 The proposal for a car free scheme for the new homes received encouraging feedback from the local residents; as although many did seek assurances that the London Borough of Camden would enforce this condition and prevent the new residents from applying for a parking permit.
- 4.8 One attendee was keen to see the retention of the cobbled setts as they felt this would enhance the development and pay greater homage to the history of the site and local area. It was also suggested that the weigh bridge at the entrance of the site was retained. Additionally, some residents expressed an interest in the proposed materials for the façade.
- 4.9 Residents sought clarification on whether there were plans for a gated entrance. The general preference was for a development without a gated entrance. One attendee expressed strong opposition to a gated entrance.
- 4.10 A number of issues were raised at the exhibition. Some residents, mostly from 55 Holmes Road and the properties close to the site in Inkerman Road, were particularly concerned about the impact the massing of the proposed development would have on their views. Once it was explained that the proposed massing would be stepped back away from neighbouring properties many were reassured about the impact of the development on their properties.

One resident was concerned about the movement of construction traffic and wanted clarification on the roads the construction traffic would use.

- 4.11 The exhibition was also helpful in identifying potential future stakeholders who will be kept informed as the application progresses. All exhibition feedback has been logged and securely retained by Four Communications, who will keep local residents informed (unless they expressed otherwise) as the scheme progresses through the application process.

Exhibition methodology

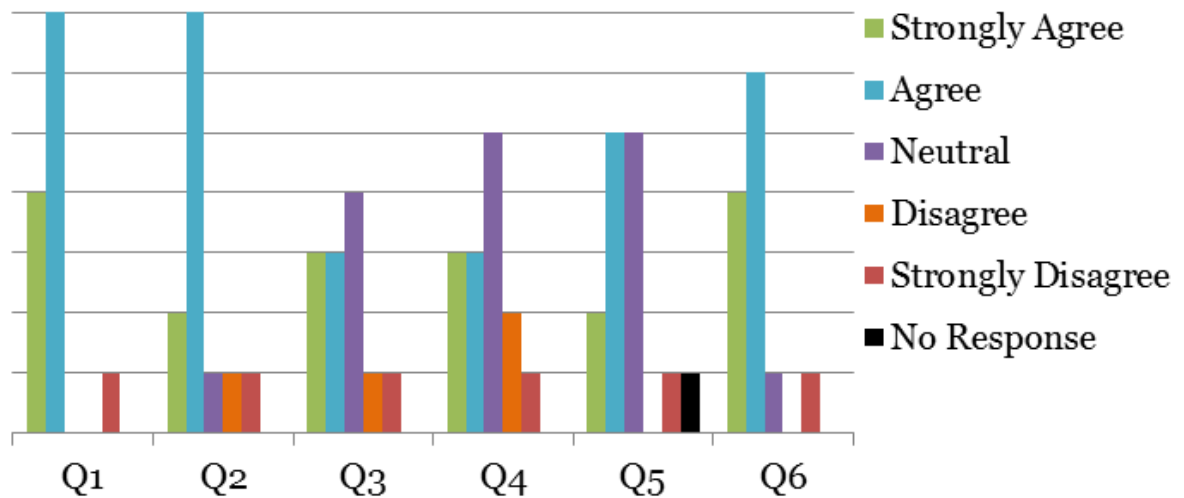
- 4.12 **Publicity.** The exhibition was publicised through letters, posted First Class and via hand delivery, to approximately 1,000 households and businesses in the area surrounding the application site. The delivery area is shown on the distribution map below. The addresses within the **red** line received a letter of invitation to the exhibition via a letter drop. The addresses within the **blue** line received a letter of invitation to the exhibition via First Class Royal Mail delivery. The site is marked in a **black** line.



- 4.13 **Venue.** The exhibition was held on site at 45 Holmes Road in one of the existing dance studios. The site was well signed and accessible to all.
- 4.14 **Opening times.** The exhibition was held on Wednesday 19 February 2014 from 3pm to 8pm.
- 4.15 **Written feedback.** Approximately 26 people attended the exhibition. All exhibition attendees were encouraged to complete a feedback form. Attendees could complete the feedback form at the exhibition or, alternatively, take the form away and return it to the FREEPOST address provided. At the time of writing, 12 completed feedback forms had been returned to Four Communications.
- 4.16 **Feedback form responses.** The responses to the feedback form are set out in the table below:

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No response
The mix of light industrial based commercial space and new homes is right for the local area	4	7	-	-	1	-
The industrial feel of the architecture fits in well with the character and history of the local area	2	7	1	1	1	-
Redevelopment of the site should include the same or more commercial space and create local jobs	3	3	4	1	1	-
The scheme should include larger family homes for affordable rent	3	3	3	2	1	-
The new homes created should be car free to keep the impact on local residents and local traffic to a minimum	2	5	3	-	1	1
The design and consistent approach to the landscaping and access road are a good idea	4	6	1	-	1	-

4.17 The response from the questionnaire is set out in the graph below:



4.18 The addresses of feedback form respondents have been securely logged and retained by Four Communications. They will be added to the Applicant’s mailing list and will be kept informed as the application progresses and invited to future consultation events (unless expressed otherwise by the respondent).

5.0 Stakeholder meetings pre and post exhibition

5.1 In advance of the public consultation exhibition Four Communications offered briefings to a number of local stakeholders, neighbours and local residents. These were held at around the same time as the exhibition.

5.2 The table below provides a record of the meetings with stakeholder, pre and post exhibition.

Date	Consultation
15 January	Offer of a briefing to all three Kentish Town ward councillors and Councillor Phil Jones, Cabinet Member for Sustainability, Transport & Planning
1 February 2014	A meeting with the Kentish Town Neighbourhood Forum, the Inkerman Area Residents Association, the Kentish Town Road Action and resident representatives from 55 Holmes Road
13 February 2014	A meeting with residents from 55 Holmes Road
14 February 2014	A meeting with St Patrick's Primary School
26 February 2014	A meeting with Collège Francais Bilingue de Londres

5.3 Ward councillors and Cabinet Member for Sustainability, Transport & Planning Cllr Phil Jones were all offered briefings. Cllr Apak responded indicating that he would not be in a position to meet given his role on the Development Control Committee, but requested to be kept updated with the progress of the application.

5.4 The meetings with the local stakeholders were mostly positive and demonstrated support for the development in principle. Some stakeholders were strongly opposed to any gating of the site and sought assurances that the Applicant would raise this concern with the London Borough of Camden's officers. The design of the development was praised and was considered appropriate and respectful to the character of the local area.

5.5 The potential impact of the development on the views of nearby residents was raised, especially by the residents from 55 Holmes Road. A small but significant number of residents were strongly concerned about the height, bulk and massing of the building and impact on visual amenity.

5.6 The retention of the setts (cobble) was encouraged by representatives from KTNF, as was the weigh bridge at the entrance of the site. The stakeholders welcomed the Applicant's assurance that they would support the retention of these features in the proposed development.

5.7 The local schools had slightly different concerns than the local residents and stakeholder groups. St Patrick's Primary School and Collège Francais Bilingue de Londres were particularly interested in the movement of construction traffic and how this will be managed to ensure child safety during the school run. The Applicant reassured both schools that the construction traffic movement would be arranged to cause minimal impact on the local schools and that a full Traffic and Construction Management Plan would be submitted as part of the application.

5.8 The queries raised by the neighbours, residents and stakeholders in these meetings are fully addressed in the relevant parts of the planning application documentation.

6.0 Changes to the proposals

- 6.1 Following consultation with residents and pre-application meetings with the London Borough of Camden, Tiuta Properties and Lynas Architects have undertaken significant revisions to the design and construction methodology that address directly the issues raised in consultation.
- 6.2 **Reducing bulk and massing.** Following the concerns expressed by residents in 55 Holmes Road, immediate neighbours in Inkerman Road and comments from the planning authority, Tiuta Properties and Lynas Architects have revisited the overall massing and height of the scheme. The scheme has been significantly reduced in scale from 19 to 8 residential properties and the submitted proposals will have a much reduced massing. The revised proposals see the building line step back considerably from properties at Azania Mews and steps further away from 55 Holmes Road and 65-67 Holmes Road. Images of the proposed design can be found in the Design & Access Statement.
- 6.3 **Using CLT construction to reducing construction time and impact.** During consultation residents immediately neighbouring the site (principally 55 Holmes Road and in Inkerman Road) raised concerns about the impact of construction traffic and noise on their amenity. There are a number of developments coming forward or planned in the immediate area over the next several years (e.g. Camden's proposed almshouses development on the site of the former homeless hostel and the Magnet site) and a lot of associated construction. Local schools were also wanted to see construction carefully handled.

Responding to this concern the Applicant has changed the design to use cross-laminated timber (CLT) construction. This reduces construction time through off-site construction, a shorter built programme, and a high level of precision. It also improves sustainability through the use of a renewable resource and ensures a quality timber finish internally. The approach should also reduce the noise associated with construction.

- 6.5 **Retention of setts (cobble) and weigh bridge.** Kentish Town Neighbourhood Forum representatives made clear that they would like to see these features retained as part of any development. The Applicant has revised the scheme to incorporate these historic features of the site into the revised landscaping design.

7.0 Planned post-application community engagement

- 7.1 The Applicant is committed to keeping local residents and stakeholders updated about the progress of the development proposals. Following the submission of a planning application for the site planned engagement activity includes:
- A. **Newsletter.** A newsletter updating residents on the new proposals and revisions to the scheme will be distributed to c.1,000 local properties. This will include a summary of the key changes including: reduction in number of units, height, bulk and massing; new CLT construction methodology to speed up the construction and reduce the impact on neighbours; and the retention of the setts and weigh bridge.
 - B. **Email update to key stakeholders and amenity groups.** The Applicant has undertaken to get back to all the local groups with information on how the scheme has changed. This will include the local ward councillors, Kentish Town Neighbourhood Forum, Kentish Town Road Action, Inkerman Area Residents Association and residents in 55 Holmes Road.
 - C. **Resident update.** Where individual residents have raised issues with the project team we will, where possible, get back to them with an update on how the scheme revisions affect the issues that they were concerned about.
- 7.2 An addendum to this report, summarising future engagement activities undertaken, will be submitted post-application.

8.0 Summary and conclusions

- 8.1 The consultation strategy sought to reach local political and community stakeholders, including local councillors, local amenity societies, and neighbours living and working in proximity to the site.
- 8.2 The pre-application stakeholder meetings and public consultation exhibition provided an opportunity for local residents to voice their opinions on the development proposals and to engage with leading members of the development and design team, including representatives from the Applicant, Lynas Architects, DP9 and Four Communications.
- 8.3 The responses to the consultation from amenity societies, local residents and the wider community suggest that there is support for the Applicant's proposals to redevelop this site.
- 8.4 The benefits of the scheme have been acknowledged by a number of consultees, with many supporting the proposals to create new a new mixed-use development, which will provide high-quality homes and a flexible commercial space to maximise the job potential on the site. The quality of design was also praised by a number of stakeholders and residents – many welcomed the industrial feel of the architecture and felt it would complement the local character and history of the area. The consistent approach to the landscaping was also particularly well received by consultees.
- 8.5 The consultees were pleased to see the inclusion of large, family sized affordable housing units. It was widely acknowledged that this was a real positive for the scheme and would be of significant benefit to the local area.
- 8.6 Some consultees initially misunderstood the nature of the planned industrial use on the site, believing this would result in noisy machinery which would have undesirable noise consequences on nearby residents. However, once it was explained that the space would remain similar to what exists on site the inclusion of light-industrial space was welcomed especially with the improved acoustics the development would bring.
- 8.7 Consultees did not want to see a gated development. They felt this was not necessary and ran counter to the character of the local area. They were also concerned about the impact of the new residential units on local parking and were pleased to hear this is going to be a car free development and hoped Camden Council would enforce the policy vigorously.
- 8.8 Residents from 55 Holmes Road and some residents on Inkerman Road who have properties close the proposed development raised concerns about the height, bulk and massing of the development. They were particularly concerned with the impact the massing would have on their amenity space and the views they currently enjoy from their properties.
- 8.9 During consultation there was also concerns raised about the impact of construction on the local residents. Many were worried that the increased number of construction vehicles accessing and egressing from the site would cause increased congestion and pose a danger to local residents.
- 8.10 As a result of the consultation and concerns raised to the scheme presented to the local community the Applicant has made significant changes. The scheme has been significantly reduced in scale from 19 to 8 residential properties and the submitted proposals will have a much reduced massing. The revised proposals see the building line step back considerably

from properties at Azania Mews and steps further away from 55 Holmes Road and 65-67 Holmes Road.

- 8.11 The Applicant has revised the scheme in response to the Kentish Town Neighbourhood Forums requests for the retention of setts (cobble) and weigh bridge, with both now being included in the scheme. Additionally, the Applicant has changed the design to use cross-laminated timber (CLT) construction to reduce construction time through off-site construction.
- 8.10 Overall, the proposals were broadly supported with local residents and stakeholders welcoming the quality of design of the development and the efforts made to engage with the local community. The consultees recognised the benefits this development could bring to the local area, specifically in the better quality design and the provision of more flexible commercial space resulting in local employment. Furthermore, the revisions to the scheme the Applicant has made such as significantly reducing the massing of the proposed development and retaining the setts have been made in response to the comments received during the consultation.